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ABSTRACT

Recent, innovative trends in continuing education are presented in light of the need to provide non-traditional delivery systems for today's lifelong learner. The report first notes the integral role played by continuing education programs in meeting contemporary educational needs. It then describes the application and benefits of nine educational trends: (1) close alignment of programming with current manpower needs; (2) the recognition that students must take responsibility for their own learning, and the use of learning projects that are carried out independently with the aid of programmed materials, telecourses, and other media; (3) increased liaison with community agencies that can recruit disadvantaged segments of the population; (4) the abandonment of traditional classroom techniques in favor of communication and learning modes used on the job; (5) the utilization of educational facilities as multi-purpose community centers; (6) the development of in-service programs designed to enhance communication between college and industry personnel; (7) the encouragement of open-entry/open-exit programming; (8) the provision of community seminars on high-demand topics; and (9) the increased emphasis on program management, evaluation, and accountability. The report appendices enumerate Milwaukee Area Technical College's continuing education programs. (JP)

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NEW DIMENSIONS IN CONTINUING EDUCATION CAN PROVIDE SOME CONCEPTS FOR SURVIVAL IN THE 1980'S

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NEW DIMENSIONS IN CONTINUING EDUCATION
CAN PROVIDE SOME CONCEPTS FOR SURVIVAL IN THE 1980'S

WHY IT IS NEEDED

What is an educational center? Some say it is a big box filled with equal-sized little boxes called classrooms or laboratories. They are conveniently arranged for the administration to establish groups of uniform size -- 25 if the community is rich, 35 if it is poor, and 50 if it doesn't care. In each box is placed a teacher who will be all things to students, all day, all year. Bells will ring to signal the musical chair game that is played half-a-dozen times a day as groups exchange boxes.

A flexible continuing education center with new dimensions can be the "change agent" for this rigid system. Continuing education is many times referred to as a separate segment of education. Yet by the very use of the word "continuing" it denotes that it is an integral part of the total educational spectrum and is a "continuous process." Education and life are synonymous, both formally and informally.

NEW DIMENSIONS

The following are some of the major new thrusts that have been and/or are being developed to be the "change agents" for continuing education.

Manpower Projections. The continuing education program, more than any other, is in a position to change gears and directions quickly as manpower projections change because of new variables and factors. Sometimes manpower projections change almost overnight. A good example of the manpower changing picture is the present surplus in teachers in many of the disciplines while several years ago critical shortages were evident and further shortages were predicted. Some manpower projection experts are now citing that within three years today's critical shortages in some health technology fields will become surpluses while today's surplus in the engineering technologies may become a critical area.

These variables in manpower projections have to be evaluated carefully by persons since the flexibility that can be so characteristic of continuing education offers the best solution to meeting these changes brought about by unseen variables.

Educational Media - Open Education. If formal education is to be the launching pad for a lifetime of learning, then a teacher's highest achievement will be to make his students independent of him. Why, then, shouldn't the student begin to learn at once, with schools and teachers harnessing the students natural curiosity and imagination and zest for mastery right from the start?

Independent study permits the student to develop, with occasional delight and sometimes frustration, his own power to seek out information, organize facts, master material, and generally accept responsibility for his own learning.

A name for a student's independent pursuits is investigation. No one can do it for the student. He must do it for himself. One of the places for independent study for nearly all students should be a comprehensive library-learning center. In fact, his carrel or station in the center can serve as the hub of each student school program during these years. Individually scheduled work on the common curriculum, as well as on individual projects, should be a central part of the students education. Electronic aids and programmed materials become critically important; and experts are equally essential to make these powerful tools work. The independent study can take place in the well-equipped laboratory on campus or working out in industry as the apprentice does. We could learn a lot from the apprentice journeyman approach to education. Other possible centers for independent study are in the neighborhood - yes, and even in taverns in order to take the educational program to the people. The use of portable cassettes, educational television, and instructional terminal education through a computerized system can all become important means to the open education concept. The MATC TV College of the Air served a new market of people who prefer to stay in their homes and take credit courses. A total of 873 students were enrolled in 4 courses offered this fall on television. A majority of these students are married women. Enrollment for the second semester for the College of the Air at MATC increased to 1,265 individuals. Reaction to the new TV High School Series, Your Future is Now, has been gratifying with 225 students enrolled. This course offers an opportunity for those who have not completed high school to satisfy high school requirements and receive a GED diploma. In order to give a better picture of the special "open education" concept in the Milwaukee Area Technical College, it has been presented in Appendix A of this article.

Community Resources - Delegate Agencies. Even with all of the special activities and programs that are being utilized by the institutions in the "open education" concept, there is still a large segment of disadvantaged population that we cannot reach. For this we depend on an agency relationship with other community organizations who can reach them and "get them ready" for our institutional setting. This we call "open education" by agencies "without" the institutional setting. It is our feeling, based on fact, that there are certain things that the agency can do which we cannot. For example, they can go into the local communities, talk with the families, recruit the students, and give them the basic training which is essential for employment at a later stage.

Basically, the point is: The program was started through an agency which existed in the community with which they were familiar, and in which they had confidence. These programs have been very successful. The agencies of the community we are working with in this capacity are in Appendix B.

In order to help the Milwaukee Area Technical College and the community in the coordination of these agencies, a coordinating organization was formed, known as the Community Relations-Social Development Commission.

This is a brief analysis of various methods and techniques used at the Milwaukee Area Technical College in cooperation with other community agencies to promote the "open education" concept. We cannot claim, nor do we believe that we are capable of, 100 percent success in this effort. There are too many diversionary forces at work with the students, but we feel that our

success -- a successful completion of the program -- is achieved with from 50 to 85 percent of the student population. The great majority of the students trained are disadvantaged in one way or another. The percent of placement in jobs after completion is significantly high. Our special "open education" concept in Milwaukee is not the panacea but is one case method that has met with some success.

The Learning Process. We cannot meet the learning process needs of the future with the traditional or conventional method. Say education to almost anyone, and you conjure up the mental picture of a rectangular room that encloses a teacher facing approximately 30 students. It is hard to think up many significant occasions when people group themselves in this way outside of education. In business or the profession, people work alone; or they talk things over with somebody else; or they confer in groups of three or four, up to a dozen or so; or they join large audiences -- numbering hundreds, sometimes more -- for exposition or demonstration. One innovative means of permitting the student to develop on his own power, to seek out information, organize facts, master material, and accept his responsibility is through independent study.

The second learning process is dialogue. Mankind has accepted as an ideal mode of instruction the great teacher in discourse with a single student such as Aristotle with Alexander, Johnson with Boswell, Ann Sullivan with Helen Keller, and others. A third method within the learning process is the seminar or small-group discussion. A small group is primarily useful for interaction, controversy, debate, side-taking, and opinion-forming. A fourth innovative method in the learning process is the large group presentation. It is usually pure one-way communication. This can be done personally or through televised courses, tapes, international telecommunications via the satellite or other technological devices. The use of large groups, wherever appropriate, releases that much teacher and student time for independent study, dialogue, or for study in small group seminars.

It might be better to produce both a better institution for continuing education and an institution that would be a leadership force in the regeneration and revival of the total community. This could happen not only through the education of people but also through a new approach to the planning operation of the educational facilities. Facilities could become an integral part of, and a contribution to, the renewal of the community. Some examples of this are:

1. A multi-purpose facility which could be used to incorporate the spirit of change and suggestions given above to improve the learning in a self-renewing concept. This facility would be used by business, labor, and industry for their needed activities such as apprentice education, trade shows, interchange of employees, and interchange of facilities for better utilization and less duplication. The facility would offer an opportunity to the other community activities. It would be used 52 weeks a year, seven days per week and 24 hours per day.

2. Converted surplus properties offer excellent opportunities for rehabilitation for continuing education centers. Many recent studies through the Educational Facilities Laboratory of the Ford Foundation have demonstrated that the hypothesis that it is cheaper and better to build new than to rehabilitate is erroneous.

3. In order to promote the multi-purpose facility concept and to work as a leadership force in the community to promote industrial and business development, the industrial park example has great merit because the educational center has the advantages of the nearby industries for cooperative programs and job placement. The industries have the advantage of their built-in skilled help.

4. Each of the 50 states conduct state and local fairs. Acreage and facilities are set aside for these. It is my contention that a vocational-technical facility with continuing education can be planned with other community activities in order to make these a year-round operation. It is somewhat of an expensive item when the facilities are utilized, in many cases, only two to three weeks per year.

5. The construction of continuing educational facilities committed to meeting the needs of the central city are very important for the progress of this country. This commitment can be assured and achieved through its being incorporated in the overall plan for the face-lifting and restoration of the deteriorated part of the city.

6. In the planning of the continuing education facility, the building-in of a conversion factor is very important. This offers the district the opportunity to give up the facility for another purpose and yet be able to recoup its capital investment.

Teacher Source. The resources for personnel to staff the continuing education centers have come primarily from business and industry for this educational field. The need for a combination of business and industrial experience in education is vital, but scarce. A person from the actual trade area who is hired for the teaching position many times lacks the knowledge and understanding of the growth and development of human beings as well as the motivation aspects of learning. On the other hand, the educator lacks the knowledge and experience in the trade area. A combination is the answer. Therefore, we take people from the trades and train them in the educational aspects. Now, we need to do more of taking of educators and giving them the trade experience. Another important resource for the improvement of the continuing education program is the teacher after we hire him. We must supply him with in-service educational opportunities in order for him to keep abreast of the changes in the business and industrial world. One of the best means for doing this is to create an exhange program with business and industry whereby their people come in to the continuing education center in order to teach, counsel and to help administer it. On the other hand, the educator can go into industry and spend some time helping business and industry to achieve their goals and objectives and to learn their procedures, policies, and practices in the actual progress of the industry within the business world. A close working relationship with business, industry, and the continuing education center must continue to develop in order that an in-service program for better understanding of education as it relates to the community can take place.

Program and Student Options. A new dimension in the continuing education programs must permit the student the options to enter-leave-enter-leave-whatever is necessary to meet the needs of the students. The student may need to go to school for awhile, work awhile, do a combination of both for awhile, enter the military service for awhile, attend another educational institution,

transfer back to our continuing education center -- all of this must be provided in a flexible continuing educational program. This program should not have any of today's rigidity of related major and minor sequence. In addition, a number of the disciplines or specialities will be changing. For this reason, a broad disciplinary training program for the flexibility of the technical changes must be part of continuing education. The student will have to become involved in cross-disciplinary approaches to his or her job. In this, the student will become the vital component and support of some rather untraditional areas of work with which we are presently expermenting such as biomedical engineering, biospace engineering, human factors engineering, electro-mechanical engineering, pharmaceutical-psychological engineering, ethical and human value technology -- and who knows what else the future may require? The person receiving these types of cross-disciplinary approaches will have a tremendous amount of specialization but will also have an approach that is broadening because the specialist will have to have this broadened approach whereby he can move flexibly with his particular skill or technical area as it changes from day-to-day and month-to-month. When the applicant enters the continuing education center, a flexible approach in regard to his present body of knowledge will have to be evaluated. Advanced standing can be measured upon evaluation of his past program such as in apprentice education, trade exams, etc. He can transfer credits from other colleges or universities. His previous work experience and education can be evaluated. An evaluation of his studies carried on as part of civil or military training programs can be duly certified. General knowledge exams can be given in order to permit the student to move at his own pace, skill, and speed. To meet these program and student option objectives, there must be a comprehensive continuing education program in an institution with a flexible curriculum and with excellent guidance and counseling.

Special Community Services. In the past year our school had 374 community service sessions with an attendance of 94,851 persons gathering knowledge from 453 speakers from all over the United States. It was our privilege to work with 117 cooperating organizations who assisted us in having the largest number of community service programs in the history of our school. These special seminars covered a diversified list of topics from freeway driving, drug abuse, sales clinics, wig selection and care, to "How to complete your income tax." They were held in more than fifty-four different locations throughout the community.

Supervision, Evaluation and Accountability. A new "in" word has arrived on the educational scene to replace tired, overworked "relevance." It is "accountability" - a term used to describe a process and a concept which could revolutionize the nation's schools by the end of the 1980's.

Supervision and evaluation are in reality segments of the total concept of accountability in education. Good supervision and evaluation are means or techniques to reveal our accountability. They are really a part of the performance contracting as a response to accountability in education.

Accountability can mean many things . The dictionary definition is "responsibility." In education, or at least to those who are leading the accountability movement, it means something specific: Decide what it is you are going to do. Do it. Then prove you've done it. This is the procedure that we are going to have to use to supervise, evaluate and account for our continuing education programs in the future.

SUMMARY

God created all living things on the earth -- but human beings were created with more imagination, creativity, and innovative minds. Are we going to use this creative thinking in establishing and implementing new dimensions for a changing world? Are we going to plan for the changes of the future, or will things just change regardless of us? These are the questions we must answer as we consider those new dimensions in continuing education which I have presented.

APPENDIX A

I. Special Activities and Programs

1. Southern Wisconsin Television High School.
2. Southern Wisconsin Television College.
3. Commando I Project to encourage parolees to complete Continuation Education.
4. Program Employability.
5. Sensitivity Training for teaching and recruiting the disadvantaged.
6. "Crossover," a special exploratory program in pre-vocational and technical programs for high-risk graduates from the inner core, north and south.
7. Recruitment and orientation of disadvantaged applicants for admission into the community service aide program.
8. House-to-house summer recruitment program.

II. Special Programs for Motivation and Stimulus

1. Continuing education for high school dropouts.
2. Total systems approach for reading for disadvantaged youth.
3. Dental laboratory in a closed circuit television system.
4. Utilizing training films in qualifying welding certification candidates.
5. Linguistic competence through an oral, structural approach.
6. Audio-visual tutorial teaching system for youth in college basic speech courses.
7. A programmed auto-tutorial approach to Chemistry I and II.
8. Audio-visual tutorial program in business mathematics.
9. Nursing Skills in a learning laboratory.
10. Auto-tutorial approach to Biological Sciences.
11. Budget power.
12. Program for consumer education of the handicapped, disadvantaged population.
13. Food Service Training Program.
14. Reading Workshop for Adults.
15. English as a Second Language.
16. Basic Education and Eighth Grade Diploma Program for Adults.
17. General Education Developmental Program.
18. Providing the General Education Development laboratory for high school equivalency training.
19. Remedial arithmetic course for disadvantaged associate degree nursing applicants and students.
20. Understanding Human Behavior preparatory course in the Health Occupations.
21. Reading Improvement preparatory course in the Practical Nurse Program.
22. Personal Money Management.
23. Civil Service examination review.
24. Evening Continuing Education.
25. Developmental programs for all technologies.
26. Adult High School Diploma for Disadvantaged Persons in Vocational Training.
27. Individualized Counseling--Teaching Adults with Learning Difficulties.

28. Home Management Series for the AFDC Mothers and Non-Welfare Poor.
29. Home Management for Unwed Mothers.
30. Special education programs for socially maladjusted and handicapped.
31. Preparatory program for industrial or apprentice programs.
32. Preparatory program for construction trades programs.
33. Consumer Emphasis in Adult Programs.
34. TV workshop for disadvantaged youth as pre-vocational training.
35. Maintenance Training.
36. Family Living Education for disadvantaged adults.
37. Computerized Guidance.

APPENDIX B

1. The Opportunity Industrializations Center was conceived and operates to involve persons of varied economic and vocational levels in an escalating remedial - pre-vocational process.
2. El Centro Espanol was established to meet the peculiar problems of the Spanish-speaking community and to serve as a base for improving the social and economic status of the group.
3. Concentrated Employment Project represents the major manpower development thrust of the United States Department of Labor.
4. The University of the Streets beams its efforts toward high school dropouts and young persons who are parolees.
5. New Careers seeks to stimulate upward mobility particularly among employed persons who now function in paraprofessional roles.
6. Transitional School was developed out of the realization that thousands of high school graduates could not qualify for college entrance based upon the traditional entrance requirements.
7. Harambee House was established for youth who are parolees and have need for intensive guidance and counseling.
8. The Urban League was created to assist blacks who come from the rural south to adjust to northern city life.
9. The Jewish Vocational Service concentrates on testing - re-testing and frequent psychological contacts.
10. The JOBS Program operates as a relationship between the National Alliance of Businessmen and the U. S. Department of Labor. It is for the hard-core unemployed.
11. Goodwill Industries, Inc. provides the handicapped with the opportunity to engage in meaningful and productive operation.
12. Northcott Neighborhood House operates on the settlement house concept. It has been especially successful in discovering indigenous leadership and in providing leadership training.

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